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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHNOGRAPHY

The journal publishes contributions describing recent scientific advances in the field of ethnography, folklore, and cultural and social anthropology. Emphasis is laid on subjects related to Hungarian ethnography and folklore as well as on works presenting Hungarian folklore in the context of Eastern European and Eurasian cultures. Papers are in English, French, German, and Russian. It is published in yearly volumes of four issues.

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Manuscripts and editorial correspondence should be addressed to

ACTA ETHNOGRAPHICA HUNGARICA
Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Szeged
Egyetem u. 2, H-6722 Szeged, Hungary
E-mail: barna@hung.u-szeged.hu

■
Reviews should be sent to

András Simon or László Mód, review-editors
Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Szeged
Egyetem u. 2, H-6722 Szeged, Hungary
Phone/Fax: (+36 62) 544 216
E-mail: asimon@hung.u-szeged.hu or mod@hung.u-szeged.hu

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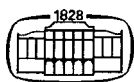
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AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ
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ternities. It is therefore very welcome to find that the volume contains two studies on this. One presents the history and present of the Altar Society in Endrőd (Melinda Kulik). Another study examines a phenomenon of Jewish culture, the *kvitli*, a possible form of sacral communication (Norbert Gleszer).

The final chapter, titled 'The Many-Faced Culture of the Great Plain', contains writings on a variety of themes. The seer who once lived in the vicinity of Szeged preserves shamanistic features (Zoltán Polner). The southern part of the Great Plain is rich in beliefs, spells and related actions, and in folk medicine (Zsuzsa Korkes). In another study we can read an interesting analysis of the mythological connections of the etymology of the Hungarian words for fire and water (Mátyás Kakuk). Notions and customs related to death and the afterlife are still very much alive among the Gypsies of Apátfalva (Norbert Szűcs). The grave markers in the cemeteries of Hajdúnánás, their types and motifs in general fit the pattern of Calvinist cemeteries on the Great Plain (Magdolna N. Szabó). One of the central cores of the programme of the Szeged Department of Ethnology is research on local identity, invented traditions and rural tourism. Some of the lessons of this research are presented through the example of the village of Pusztamérge (Bertalan Pusztai). The study of mental maps represents another area of research. One of the writings analyses the mental map Szeged people have of the Inner City (Terézia Nagy). We can also read extracts from a fieldwork diary of the research carried out over a period of five years in Máriaradna (Erika Vass).

The thematic and methodological variety of this volume of studies shows that it is still worthwhile and necessary to deal with the culture of the Great Plain.

Bernadette BORNITZ-PAPP

Zamfir DEJEU: Dansuri tradiționale din Transilvania. Cluj Napoca: Clusium 2000, 670 pp, 68 photos.

The rather belated review of this book that appeared in 2000 is justified by the fact that it is the first dance folkloristics summary to be published on Transylvania (Ardeal, Transilvania, Siebenbürgen). The Paris peace dictate ending the First World War annexed Transylvania together with a part of the neighbouring Bihar territories from Hungary and gave them to the Kingdom of Romania.

Zamfir Dejeu does not state what his aim was in writing the book or what methods he used. He limits himself to giving data and does not indicate the sources. In the first part of the book he gives an overview of Romanian dance folklore and its European connections, drawing on his own experiences in the field and on the Romanian literature. He presents the dance dialects, the character of the dances and performing style from a structuralist viewpoint. By the end of the first chapter the reader can form a picture of his aim: to give a more precise definition of the "style" of the dances characteristic of the so-called Western and the Carpathian dance dialects, and to give a more precise picture of

the dances of the few little known transitional areas. However, he does not precisely define the borders of the areas covered in his research. He does not give a reason why he classified the area he calls the Carpathian dialect and the Bihar areas under the area of Transylvania mentioned in the title. The article by Gyula Pálffy that appeared in Hungarian Dance News in 1987 under the title 'On the Folk Dance Traditions of the Roumanians in Hungary', could be an excellent source work for the study of the dance culture of the Bihar areas. Presumably the author is not aware of this article.

The title of the book suggests that we will learn something about the dances not only of the Romanians but also of the other ethnic groups living in Transylvania (Hungarians, Gypsies, Germans, etc.). Unfortunately, this remained only a possibility.

In his dance history approaches he does not indicate the historical period in which the different dance types typically developed and in precisely what chronological connection these dance types could be with each other. He is not familiar with a number of important works in the literature, such as Curt Sachs: *Eine Weltgeschichte des Tanzes* (Berlin, 1933), Louis Maurice: *Le Folklore et la Danse* (Paris, 1963), and Tobias Norlind: *Danses Historia* (Stockholm, 1941).

The second chapter gives a theoretical and methodological summary. We learn the author's method of analysing dances and the typification aspects. In analysing the dances Zamfir Dejeu uses a method of notation not known internationally and not used uniformly even by Romanian dance researchers. As a result it will be very difficult to use the material for an international analysis and summing up that will soon be needed. Although the author presents in detail the relevant Romanian literature, here too there are gaps in the international outlook. He also presents the kinetography Laban, the internationally most widely accepted system, but he considers that it needs to be adapted for use in the analysis of Romanian dances. We can state that this work had already been done by György Martin and his colleagues by the late 1980s. We can only regret that the author is not aware of this fact. Two works can be mentioned in this connection: Adrienne Kaeppler's book published in 1972, in Bloomington, *Method and Theory in Analysing Dance Structure with an Analysis of Tongan Dance*, and György Martin's article published in 1965, in *Studia Musicologica*, 'Considérations sur l'analyse des relations entre la danse et la musique de danse populaires'.

In describing and classifying the dance types, the author places the emphasis on the musical accompaniment to the dance, analysing from the viewpoint of the musician. This can be of interest also for Hungarian folk dance research, as a difference can be found in Hungary too between musician-oriented and dancer-oriented dance analysis. The dance music beats and the stresses placed on them can be perceived differently by the musician and the dancer, and as a result the throb of music and dance can be different. Such an extremely detailed, categorising description and analysis of the music accompanying the dance is essential for a structuralist investigation of this phenomenon, and to the best of my knowledge no other researcher has done anything comparable. This is perhaps the most outstanding result of the book, and from this point of view Zamfir Dejeu's work is extremely important and fills a gap.

The third chapter is about supplementary elements of the dance, melody and accompaniment. The author included in the investigation such elements complicating and in

cases influencing the rhythm of the dance as whistling, snapping, singing during the dance and dance words, although he wrongly mentions the latter as a specifically Romanian feature. Together with dance music he attributes an important role to these in the rhythmic accompaniment. Hungarian research has not yet dealt with these phenomena in such depth. He classifies the dance words not only from the structural viewpoint but also on the basis of features of content and function. In this connection he draws attention to an important phenomenon not known from the Hungarian material when he mentions a form of shouting (*csujogatás*) that is half way between the folk song and the dance word. The dancer recites loudly the first part of the text, then gradually changes to singing at the beginning of the second line. The same procedure is repeated in the third and fourth lines. We can recognise here an appearance of the connection between folk song and dance words frequently mentioned by our researchers.

In the fourth chapter the author presents the dances divided into four main types: group dances, young men's dances, couple and ritual dances. Within these he distinguishes fifteen subtypes. He characterises each with a short description. As examples of the thirty-six dance kinds identified in the subtypes he gives the full notated dance process for fifty dances. Because of their length this chapter makes up close to 90% of the entire book. This chapter also contains other results of interest to us. For example, he mentioned a few Romanian dances about which Hungarian research has known very little, and which are important for a precise knowledge of the Romanian connections of our Transylvanian dances. One such dance is the *Romana*, a rare young men's dance that the author associates with the Transylvanian stick dances, another in the round-dance for four from Pecsétszeg, Kolozs County (Chiuești – Jud. Cluj) that we previously knew about only from Hungarian material.

A table at the end of the book shows the types of Romanian dances in Transylvania, classified by subtypes, and their characteristics from the viewpoint of the beat, the throbbing of the music and of the dance. However, there are no maps that could give a better picture of the author's idea of the areas and that could be more easily compared to our own.

The printing of the book is on a low standard and the photos are of poor quality. Philologically the bibliography does not meet scholarly requirements, the author did not use notes and there is no explanation of the abbreviations.

Nevertheless, it can be said on the whole that, despite the shortcomings mentioned, the book is a valuable source work for researchers dealing with Transylvanian dances.

The author is an associate of the Folklore Institute of Cluj, a member of the youngest generation of Romanian ethnochoreologists and Romanian ethnomusicologists.

Sándor VARGA